

COUNCIL ON HOUSING  
Public Session  
Huling Cove Community Building  
Lewes, Delaware  
November 14, 2012

**December 12, 2012 Agenda Item**

- DSHA Annual Report – hard copies for Council members.

**Important Dates**

- November 27 – Office of Management and Budget public hearing for housing.
- November 29 – Council ranking of priorities due to Mr. Peters
- December 12 – next Council meeting.

Ruth Sokolowski, Chair, called to order the public session of the Council on Housing at 2:00 p.m. on November 14, 2012. In addition to Ms. Sokolowski, the following Council members were present:

Francis Julian	Ralph Peters
Hugh Leahy	Vincent White
Connie Louder	Norma Zumsteg
Corrine Massey	

The following Council members were absent and excused from the meeting:

Pat Batchelor	Donna Mitchell
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Also attending:

Lynda Blythe, Administrative Specialist III, Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)  
Marlena Gibson, Planner IV, DSHA  
Matthew Heckles, Legislative and Policy Advisor, DSHA

Guest present:

Ken Smith, Delaware Housing Coalition (DHC)

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Zumsteg moved that the Minutes of October 10, 2012 be approved as written. Mr. Peters seconded the motion and the Minutes were unanimously approved.

## **DSHA REPORT** – Matt Heckles

- Hurricane Sandy
  - October 25-26 – DSHA staff completed tropical storm preparations, including information to tenants, at each of the 10 DSHA public housing properties.
  - October 27-28 – DSHA staff monitored conditions at the sites during the hurricane. The properties suffered very minor damage and there were no evacuations.
- State Budget Process
  - November 27 – 10:30 a.m. in the State Senate Chambers – the Office of Management and Budget public hearing wherein Mr. Anas Ben Addi, Director of DSHA, will present an overview of DSHA's proposed budget request for the forthcoming year. Council members are encouraged to attend.
- Annual Report
  - The DSHA Annual Report is completed and posted on the DSHA website.

## **COMMUNITY IMPACT of RENTAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**– Ken Smith

Mr. Smith gave a PowerPoint presentation (copy attached) of a DHC study completed and presented at a breakout session at the Governor's Conference on Housing held October 11th, which Ms. Sokolowski and Mr. Peters attended. A complete version of the study can be found on the DSHA website also. Mr. Smith also distributed two DHC reports on the subject (copies attached).

The purpose of the study was to assess the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) hypothesis of the effects of assisted rental housing in Delaware. The basic conclusion was that the assisted rental housing had a negligible effect on its surrounding area. However, there are significant variations across sites due to its characteristics, i.e. design, location, maintenance, ownership/management, and neighborhood context, which highlight the need for more research on this point. The biggest positive effect, however, is the rehab or renovation of existing assisted rental sites.

Mr. Leahy recommended that DHC, using the study and working with DSHA staff, prepare a concise set of recommendations for possible DSHA policy changes or underwriting guidelines to help ensure future projects contain the design elements and features that provide the most value for the money spent.

## **DISABILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT** – Marlena Gibson

Ms. Gibson, using the attached handout, gave a PowerPoint presentation (copy attached) of this needs assessment in which several groups participated. The complete version can be found on DSHA's website. The major themes of the study were:

- Choices and options (not just first available)
- Getting the right help the first time
- Scarcity of resources
- Successes

Resulting recommendations cover:

- Accessibility
  - The newly created DelawareHousingSearch.org provides real-time online information on affordable, accessible units.
- Affordability
  - Increase the availability of and access to affordable housing for people with disabilities.
- Community
  - Build a community-based system of care with housing options.
  - Reform systems to prioritize community care.
  - Implement discharge planning.
- Systems
  - Improve housing services systems for those with disabilities.
  - Work together better.
  - Connect people to the right help the first time.

Ms. Gibson closed noting that a housing subcommittee continues to meet to review priorities. Ms. Sokolowski referred Council to the DSHA website to read the entire version of both presentations as well as the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice report.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **LOAN REVIEW** – Mr. Leahy

There was no November meeting. It is anticipated that two tax credit applications will be reviewed in December or January.

### **OPERATIONS** – Ms. Louder

There was no November meeting. However, the Committee is continuing their work on the committee outline for the remainder of the year.

## COMMUNICATIONS – Ms. Sokolowski

Ms. Sokolowski, reporting on behalf of Ms. Batchelor, encouraged Council to attend the November 27<sup>th</sup> budget hearing.

Mr. Heckles has supplied information to Ms. Batchelor for her presentation at the hearing.

## HOUSING POLICY – Mr. Peters

The 2012 Strategic Planning Report was discussed, specifically noting Key Priority #2, i.e. “Clarify the process for determining COH policy positions and advocating for change”. The report can be found on the DSHA website.

The Policy Prioritization Criteria and Proposed Policy Agenda Items, which had been emailed to Council, were reviewed. Council was asked to rank the list of six proposed policy agenda items (A-F), with 1 being the highest and 6 the lowest priority, and email their rankings to Mr. Peters before the committee’s November 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. The committee, at that time, will review the responses and present the results at the December 12<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. An advocacy policy will be created according to these results.

## OTHER BUSINESS OLD/NEW – Ms. Sokolowski

- Council on Housing Annual Report – Ms. Sokolowski referred to the report, which had been emailed to Council, and thanked Mr. Peter for overseeing its creation. Mr. Peters moved, and Mr. Leahy seconded, that the Report be approved as presented subject to final editing by DSHA. The motion was unanimously passed.

Mr. Heckles will now have the Community Relations department complete the editing and publish the report; this should be finished and posted to the DSHA website within the next two weeks. Hard copies of the report will be given to all Council members. A hard copy of the report will also be given to the Governor at such time as Mr. Heckles can arrange a meeting with Council representatives. All Legislators will be emailed the report.

- Strategic Planning Report – Council was reminded that this report is an internal Council document to be used as a guide to accomplish various goals in the coming year.
  - The Mission and Vision statements, along with committee charges, were approved by Council at the October 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Requested changes to Key Priority #2 were made and are reflected in this report.
  - The Purpose and Overview, items 1 and 2, are new and are to be reviewed at this meeting.

Mr. Peters moved that the Strategic Planning Report be approved. Ms. Zumsteg seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

### **SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting, the annual holiday luncheon and meeting, will be held December 12, 2012, at Buena Vista Conference Center, New Castle, DE, at 11:00 a.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion made by Mr. Peter, seconded by Ms. Louder, and unanimously passed by the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lynda T. Blythe".

Lynda T. Blythe

Note: Copies of materials referenced as "attached" in these Minutes are available upon request.